

**An Archaeological Recording Brief  
On Land at Emmaus, Drove Road,  
Portslade, East Sussex**

**(NGR 525532 106403)**

**Project No. 2525**



**by  
Alice Thorne MA**

**November 2006**

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**Archaeology South-East  
1 West Street  
Ditchling  
East Sussex  
BN6 8TS**

**Tel: 01273 845497**

**Fax: 01273 844187**

**email : [fau-ucl@btconnect.com](mailto:fau-ucl@btconnect.com)**

**website: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://www.archaeologyse.co.uk)**

## **Archaeology South-East**

*Archaeology South-East is a division of the University College London Field Archaeology Unit. The Institute of Archaeology at UCL is one of the largest groupings of academic archaeologists in the country. Consequently, Archaeology South-East has access to the conservation, computing and environmental backup of the college, as well as a range of other archaeological services.*

*The Field Archaeology Unit and South Eastern Archaeological Services (which became Archaeology South-East in 1996) were established in 1974 and 1991 respectively. Although field projects have been conducted worldwide, Archaeology South-East retains a special interest in south-east England with the majority of our contract and consultancy work concentrated in Sussex, Kent, Greater London and Essex.*

*Drawing on experience of the countryside and towns of the south east of England Archaeology South-East can give advice and carry out surveys at an early stage in the planning process. By working closely with developers and planning authorities it is possible to incorporate archaeological work into developments with little inconvenience.*

*Archaeology South-East, as part of the Field Archaeology Unit, is a registered organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists and, as such, is required to meet IFA standards.*

*Abstract*

*An Archaeological recording project was conducted at Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade, East Sussex (NGR 525532 106403). Excavations for the construction of a new car park had taken place without archaeological supervision and had truncated a northwest – southeast orientated flint and lime mortar wall. The exposed area was cleaned and recorded, and inspected for further archaeological features. A mitigation strategy was developed for use if necessary.*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** Archaeology South East (ASE), a division of University College London Field Archaeology Unit (UCLFAU), have been commissioned by Emmaus to undertake an archaeological recording brief prior to submission of a planning application for the construction of a car park at Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade, East Sussex (NGR TQ 5670 1240) (*Fig. 1*).
- 1.2** The site lies within a designated *Archaeologically Sensitive Area*, immediately north of the remains of Portslade Manor, which is afforded legal protection as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (monument number BH159).
- 1.3** Ground reduction associated with the construction of a parking area on land to the west of the Emmaus building had already taken place, exposing and truncating what appeared to be a masonry wall. Such activity was curtailed at an early stage after the Local Planning Authority informed the land owner that planning permission for such development would be required.
- 1.4** No plans showing the extent of the proposed car park have been provided by the client, but the approximate extent of the proposed car park is illustrated on Figure 2. The client has informed ASE that the current area of intrusive ground works represents the totality of significant ground reduction associated with the proposed car park extension. As the site slopes generally to the south and southwest, these areas will be built up to create a roughly level terrace to the south of the existing car park, although some further topsoil removal may be required in this area.
- 1.5** Andrew Woodcock, the County Archaeologist, East Sussex County Council (ESCC) therefore advised Emmaus by letter (ref AR/1/1/LW [jun5006her]) that a programme of archaeological work should be undertaken and a report produced for submission with the planning application for the proposed development prior to determination.
- 1.6** This recommendation required that the area that had already been exposed should be cleaned and recorded by an archaeologist. A Written Assessment was then to be produced detailing the likelihood of further archaeological features being discovered within the remaining area proposed as a car park. On the basis of this a Mitigation strategy has been.
- 1.7** A method statement outlining the requirements was prepared by the Neil Griffin of Archaeology South East.

**1.8** The fieldwork was undertaken by Alice Thorne and Mark Tibble on the 24<sup>th</sup> of August 2006. The project was managed by Neil Griffin (Project Manager) and Louise Rayner (Post-excavation Manager).

**1.9** The British Geological Survey map Sheet 318/333 (Area Brighton and Worthing) Solid and Drift Edition (1:50,000 scale) indicates that the site lies on Upper and Middle chalk, with a possibility of encountering deposits of Woolwich and Reading beds.

## **2.0 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**<sup>1, 2</sup>

**2.2** The site lies within a designated *Archaeologically Sensitive Area*, immediately north of the remains of Portslade Manor. Portslade Old Manor is one of a very few examples of Norman manor houses that still exist in this country. For this reason it has been deemed a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and a Grade II listed building (monument number BH159) (Fig. 1).

**2.3** Portslade Old Manor is one of a very few examples of Norman manor houses that still exist in this country. For this reason it has been deemed a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and a Grade II listed building.

**2.4** In the *Domesday Book* there are two references to Portslade:

*"Oswald holds half a hide in Portslade he held it before 1066. It did not pay tax, he could go where he would with the land, 1 villager, value 6s".*

*"Albert held half a hide in Portslade. It did not pay tax. 1 villager with half plough. The value is and was 6s."*

**2.5** The ruined Portslade Manor stands to the N of the church. It incorporates the remains of a 12thc. house, which probably incorporated an undercroft with a hall above.

**2.6** In 1217 Hubert de Burgh held the Manor of Portslade while he was Justiciar of England and Earl of Kent. Under the reign of Henry III, Hubert commanded the English fleet in their victory over the French at Sandwich 1217. Between 1232 and 1234 the manor's ownership was transferred a number of times as Hubert fell in and out of favour with the king. The manor subsequently passed through various influential owners including Margaret, Countess of Kent, John Mansell, Treasurer of York, Earl Warenne, and successive descendents of

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<sup>1</sup> *Victoria County History: Sussex*. Vol VII, pp282-86

<sup>2</sup> Packham, A. B. 1934. 'Portslade Manor-House', *Sussex Archaeology Collection*. LXXV, 1-18

Joan and John de la Warr from 1305 to 1600. The manor then passed through the Snelling, Edwards, Westbrook, Watson and Davies families until in 1806 half the manor was conveyed to William Borrer. The Borrer family united the manor once more in 1833 and it passed through this line until at least 1870.

**2.7** Portslade Manor House was in use until 1807 when the new manor house was built. It was then used as an Almshouse for the poor. In the Victorian era it was partly demolished to provide building material for a garden folly in the manor grounds.

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

**3.1** The aims of the archaeological recording brief were to clean and record the exposed area and structure and aid assessment of the likelihood of discovering further archaeological features within the remaining area proposed as a car park.

**3.2** Intrusive excavation was not undertaken at this time, as such work may form the basis of archaeological mitigation, should the planning application for the new car park be approved by the Local Planning Authority. A shallow sondage, however, was excavated in order to establish the depth at which archaeological features may be present and to establish the surviving height of the wall that had already been partially exposed.

**3.3** All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the Specification using standard Archaeology South-East context record sheets. Deposit colours were verified by visual inspection and not by reference to a Munsell Colour chart. Particular attention was to be made to the character, height below ground level, condition, date and significance of the deposits.

**3.4** The remains were levelled with respect to Ordnance Survey datum using a Leika system 1200 Total Station. Levels information is shown in Figure 2, the site plan.

**3.5** The spoil from the excavations will also be inspected by archaeologists to recover any artefacts or ecofacts of archaeological interest.

**3.6** A full photographic record of the work was kept (*black and white prints, colour slides and digital images*) and will form part of the site archive. The archive is presently held at the Archaeology South-East offices at Ditchling and will be offered to a suitable local museum.

**3.7** All work was carried out in accordance with the Method Statement, with the *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork, Recording and Post-Excavation Work (Development Control) in East Sussex V3* (September 2003), and also with the relevant Standards and Guidance of the Institute of Field Archaeologists as applicable.

**4.0 RESULTS** (Figures 2 and 3)

**4.1** Ground work at the site had cleared an area of 3m by 14.2m in the area of the proposed car park (Figure 2). The area had been excavated through a bank of made ground, and the deposits (Contexts 1-7) had been truncated to a variable depth of between 200mm to a maximum 1.16 meters below the current ground level. The height of the stripped area ranged between 34.68–34.57mOD, with a heap of spoil masking the southern part of the excavated area (Plate 1).

**4.2** Following cleaning of the exposed area, the exposed wall and associated deposits were recorded. The deposits noted on site were as follows:

**4.3** Context 1 was a 300mm deep deposit of dark grey friable silt. This contained moderate quantities of tile, brick, glass and sub angular-sub rounded flint nodules. This comprised a topsoil deposit, and overlay all deposits including the wall (Fig 3a).

**4.4** To the north of the wall below Context 1 lay a 270mm thick deposit (Context 2) (Fig 3, Section 1). This was a friable grey-brown sandy silt, containing welsh slate, modern window glass, tile, brick and sub angular- sub rounded flint nodules. This deposit comprised a modern dump of demolition or refuse material.

**4.5** Below this similar deposit was encountered (Context 3) (Fig 3, Section 1). This comprised a moderately compact brown silty clay, containing frequent angular – sub angular flint nodules, chalk fragments and occasional fragments of charcoal. This deposit was less finds rich than Context 2 above, but occasional fragments of brick and tile were noted exposed within the section. This deposit had not been fully removed across the site and the stripped area to the north of the wall was covered by a spread of this material, precluding the identification of any further archaeological features in this area at this level (Fig 2). Intrusive excavation was not undertaken at this time, however, a shallow sondage was excavated against the northern face of the wall (Context 5, see below). This indicated that the surface of the undisturbed geology was located between 100–140mm below that stripped area, at around 34.44mOD (Fig. 3, Section 2).

- 4.6** The small area of undisturbed geology encountered in the base of the shallow sondage confirmed that the surface of the upper chalk consisted of a brownish – orange silty clay matrix containing weathered creamy white chalk fragments (Context 4).
- 4.7** A heavily truncated a flint and lime mortar wall which was located running approximately northwest – southeast across the site (Context 5) (Plates 1 and 2, Figs 2 and 3). This feature measured approximately 420mm in width and was in excess of 3m in length. It was constructed of angular flint nodules generally between 100mm-130mm in length, with no evidence of finishing or consistent coursing. It was bonded with an off-white lime mortar with abundant flint grits/pebbles to 7mm. Although not reliably datable this mortar may indicate a possible medieval to early post-medieval date. The excavation of a small sondage has indicated that the wall has been heavily truncated during groundwork, with only approximately 120mm of its depth remaining in situ within the stripped area (Fig 3b).
- 4.8** To the south of the wall Context 6 lay below the topsoil deposit (Fig 3, Section 1). This was a 300 mm thick deposit of a friable grey-brown sandy silt, containing tile, brick and sub angular- sub rounded flint nodules. This deposit comprised a modern layer of demolition or refuse material, and is likely to be the same as Context 2 to the north.
- 4.9** Below Context 6 lay Context 7, a moderately compact brown silty clay, containing frequent angular- sub angular flint nodules and occasional fragments of chalk and charcoal (Fig 3, Section 1). Occasional fragments of brick and tile were noted exposed within the section. The base of this deposit remained in situ across the site to the south of the wall, concealing any potential archaeological features in this area (Fig 2).

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

- 5.1** The wall had been heavily truncated to a maximum depth of 820mm at the eastern edge of the site. As this project consisted of a recording project only, no thorough intrusive archaeological investigation took place. As a result it is not possible at this stage to date the wall, or fully explain construction methods. However a number of observations can be made. No footing trench was identified during the recording project, and the wall appears to be situated directly on the surface of the weathered upper chalk natural. It may perhaps represent a garden or ornamental wall. As the wall shares a similar alignment to the remains of the medieval Portslade Manor to the south it is possible that they may be broadly contemporary.

**5.2** Layers of possible demolition or refuse material abut the wall, located on either side, comprising the low bank in this area. Contexts **2** and **6** are likely to be contemporary demolition deposits, but are presently undated but may be associated with the destruction of the medieval manor house in the Victorian period (see Section 2.7 above). Below this Contexts **3** and **7** represent earlier, possible garden deposits, or may represent an area of built up ground resulting from the deposition of spoil deriving from landscaping of the grounds in the surrounding area post the destruction of Wall **5**.

**5.3** The presence of the base of deposits 3 and 7 across the site have precluded the identification of any further archaeological features. It is possible that archaeological features could remain preserved on site sealed below these deposits.

## **6.0 Mitigation Strategy** by Neil Griffin

### **6.1 Introduction**

The written assessment concludes that an undated masonry wall, that may be associated with the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Portslade Manor, has been severely truncated by the construction works. cursory examination and recording of the remains of this structure have now been undertaken. Archaeological features that may be cut into the underlying chalk bedrock are presently masked by c.100mm of overburden, so their presence/absence cannot be satisfactorily determined at this stage.

### **6.2 Scope of Construction Works**

Discussions with David Batchelor (Premises Manager, Emmaus) have revealed that the existing trench has been reduced to its approximate formation level. Therefore little or no further ground reduction will take place in this area. It is intended to extend the car park to the west, but in this area, ground levels will need to be raised to account for the sloping nature of the site. However, minimal ground reduction will still be necessary to remove topsoil, before laying the sub-base across the entire area of the car-park and top dressing with recycled chippings.

### **6.3 Suggested Mitigation**

Any archaeological features that may be cut into the chalk bedrock will be preserved in situ beneath c.100mm of overburden and further sealed by the formation layers of the proposed car park. It may be prudent to ensure that a barrier of sand and Teram (or similar) is laid above the remains of the masonry wall to ensure that no further damage is caused.

- 6.4** As this masonry feature is observed to extend westwards into the area where further topsoil stripping will be undertaken and is also known to survive close to the existing ground surface, it will be necessary to maintain an **enhanced archaeological watching brief** during the lowering of the ground level. This will enable the continuation of this wall and any other archaeological deposits and features to be adequately recorded.

**SMR Summary Form**

Site Code	SEP06					
Identification Name and Address	Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade, East Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR TQ255064					
Geology	Upper and Middle Chalk					
Arch. South-East Project Number	2525					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other ✓
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval.	Excav.	WB.	Other 24/08/06		
Sponsor/Client	Emmaus					
Project Manager	Neil Griffin					
Project Supervisor	Alice Thorne					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p>An Archaeological recording project was conducted at Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade, East Sussex (NGR 525532 106403). Excavations for the construction of a new car park had taken place without archaeological supervision and had truncated a northwest – southeast orientated flint and lime mortar wall. The exposed area was cleaned and recorded, and inspected for further archaeological features. A mitigation strategy was developed for use if necessary.</p>						

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**OASIS ID: archaeo16-19685**

## Project details

Project name	Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade
Short description of the project	An Archaeological recording project was conducted at Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade, East Sussex (NGR TQ255064). Excavations for the construction of a new car park had taken place without archaeological supervision and had truncated a northwest southeast orientated flint and lime mortar wall. The exposed area was cleaned and recorded, and inspected for further archaeological features. A mitigation strategy was developed for use if necessary.
Project dates	Start: 24-08-2006 End: 24-08-2006
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	SEP06 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	2525 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	WALL Uncertain
Investigation type	'Recorded Observation'
Prompt	Planning condition

## Project location

Country	England
Site location	EAST SUSSEX BRIGHTON AND HOVE HOVE Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade
Postcode	XXXXXXXX
Study area	14.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 5670 1240 50.8892193859 0.228189913211 50 53 21 N 000 13 41 E Point •
Height OD	Min: 34.00m Max: 35.00m

## Project creators

Name of	Archaeology South-East
---------	------------------------

Organisation  
 Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body  
 Project design originator Archaeology South-East  
 Project director/manager Neil Griffin  
 Project supervisor Alice Thorne  
 Type of sponsor/funding body Client  
 Name of sponsor/funding body Emmaus

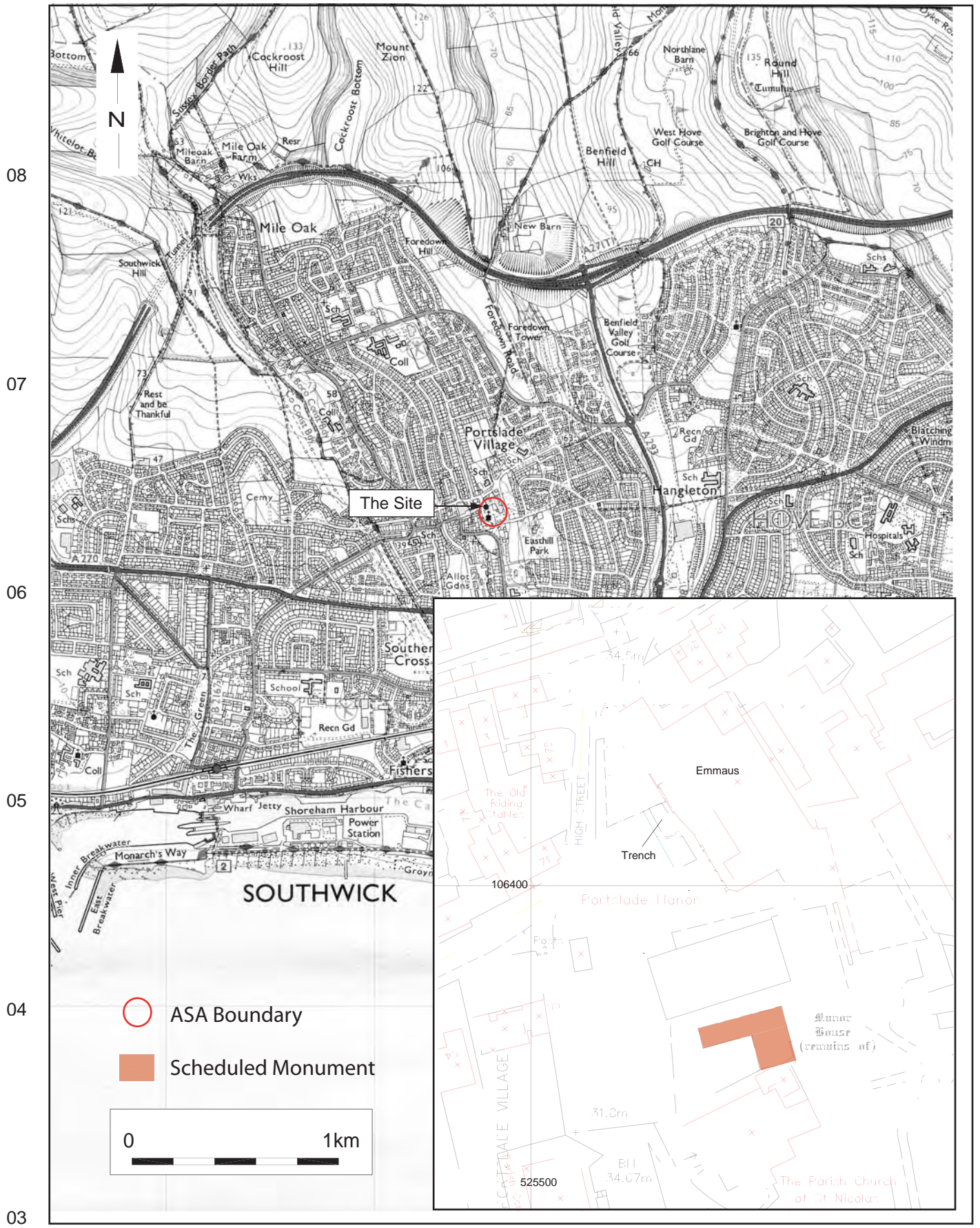
**Project archives**

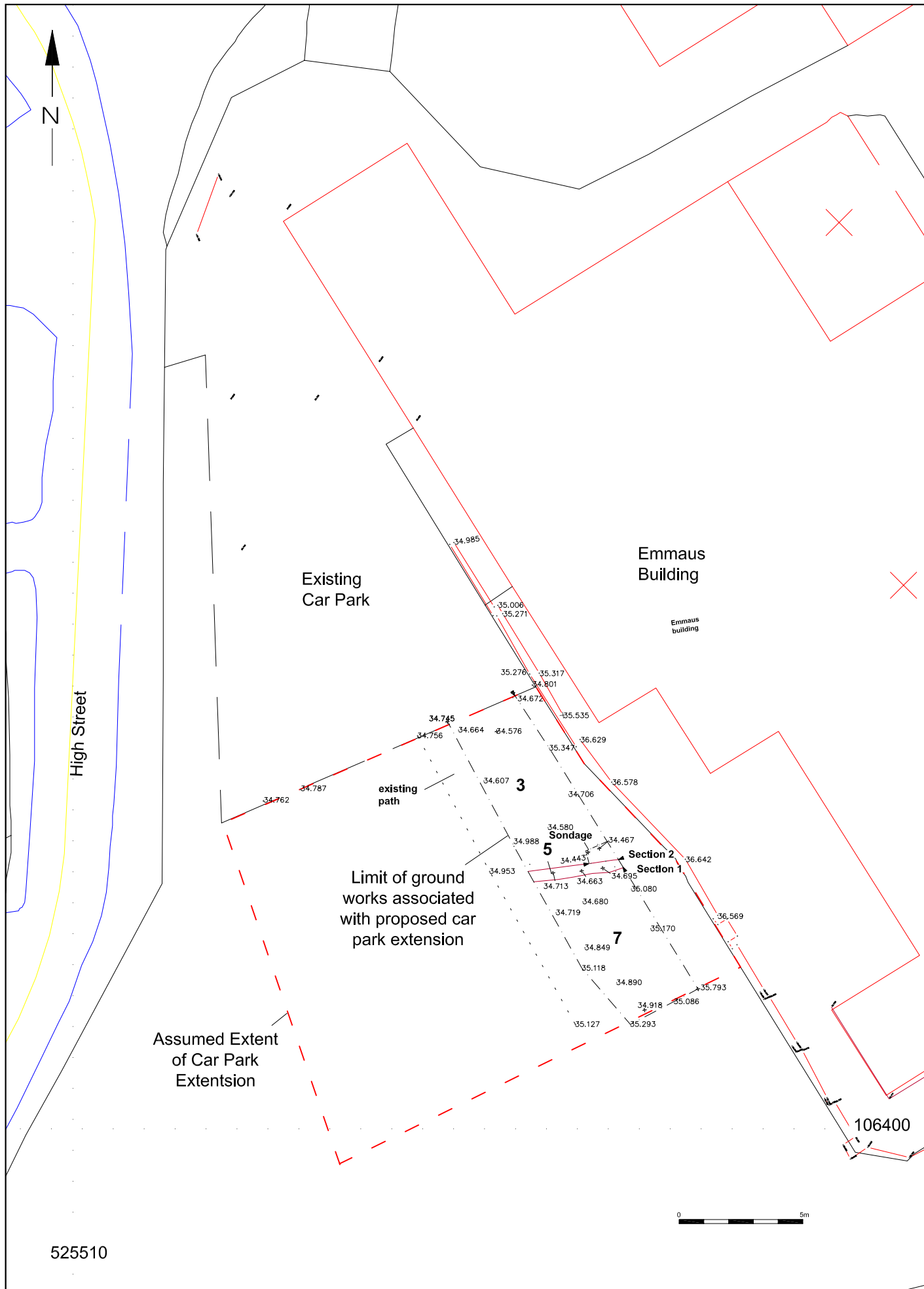
Physical Archive Exists? No  
 Digital Archive Exists? No  
 Paper Archive recipient Local Museum  
 Paper Contents 'none'  
 Paper Media available 'Context sheet', 'Correspondence', 'Miscellaneous Material', 'Notebook - Excavation', 'Research', 'General Notes', 'Photograph', 'Report', 'Section', 'Survey'

**Project bibliography 1**

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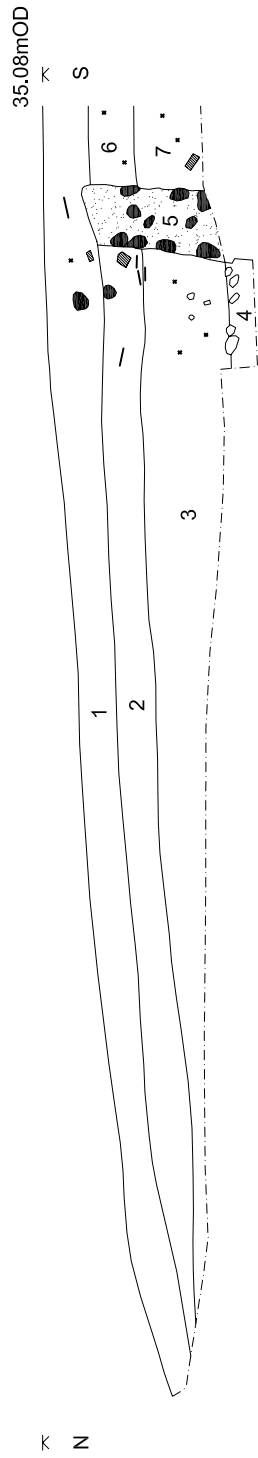
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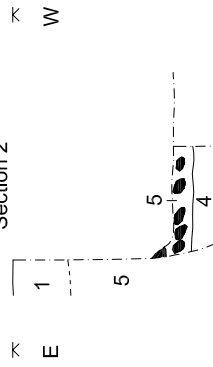


© Archaeology South-East			Emmaus, Drove Road, Portslade		Fig. 2
Ref: 2525	Nov 2006	Drawn by: FEG	Site Plan		

Section 1  
West Facing Bulk showing Wall 5



Section 2  
35.08mOD



- Flint
- ▨ Mortar
- ▧ Slate
- Charcoal
- Chalk
- ▩ Brick





Plate 1: General site shot looking south towards ruins of Portslade Manor



Plate 2: West facing section of trench showing extent of truncation of wall

Head Office  
Units 1 & 2  
2 Chapel Place  
Portslade  
East Sussex BN41 1DR  
Tel: +44(0)1273 426830 Fax:+44(0)1273 420866  
email: [fau@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:fau@ucl.ac.uk)  
Web: [www.archaeologyse.co.uk](http://www.archaeologyse.co.uk)



London Office  
Centre for Applied Archaeology  
Institute of Archaeology  
University College London  
31-34 Gordon Square, London, WC1 0PY  
Tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778 Fax:+44(0)20 7383 2572  
Web: [www.ucl.ac.uk/caa](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/caa)

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